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CANADA
THE MASK

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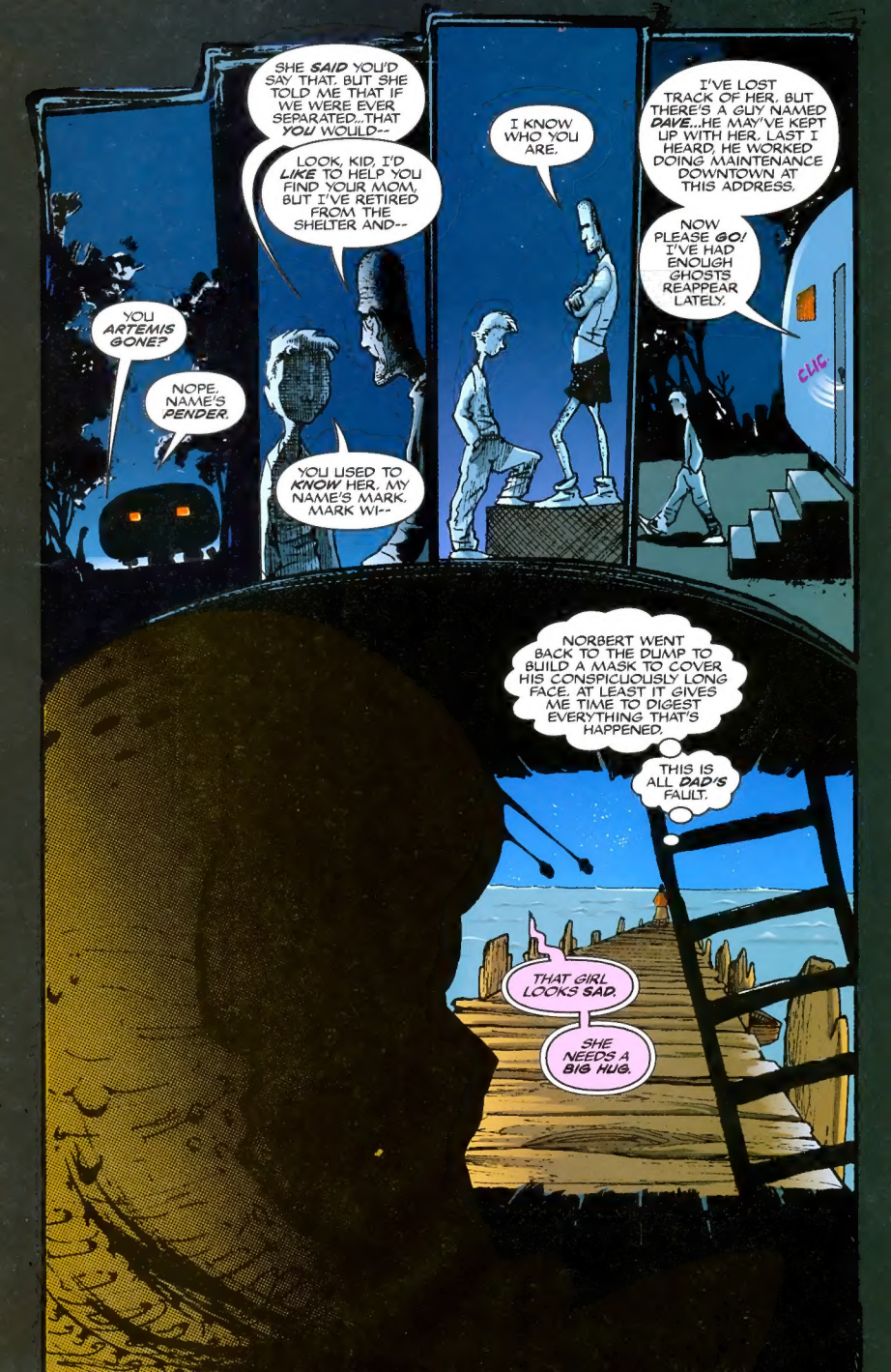
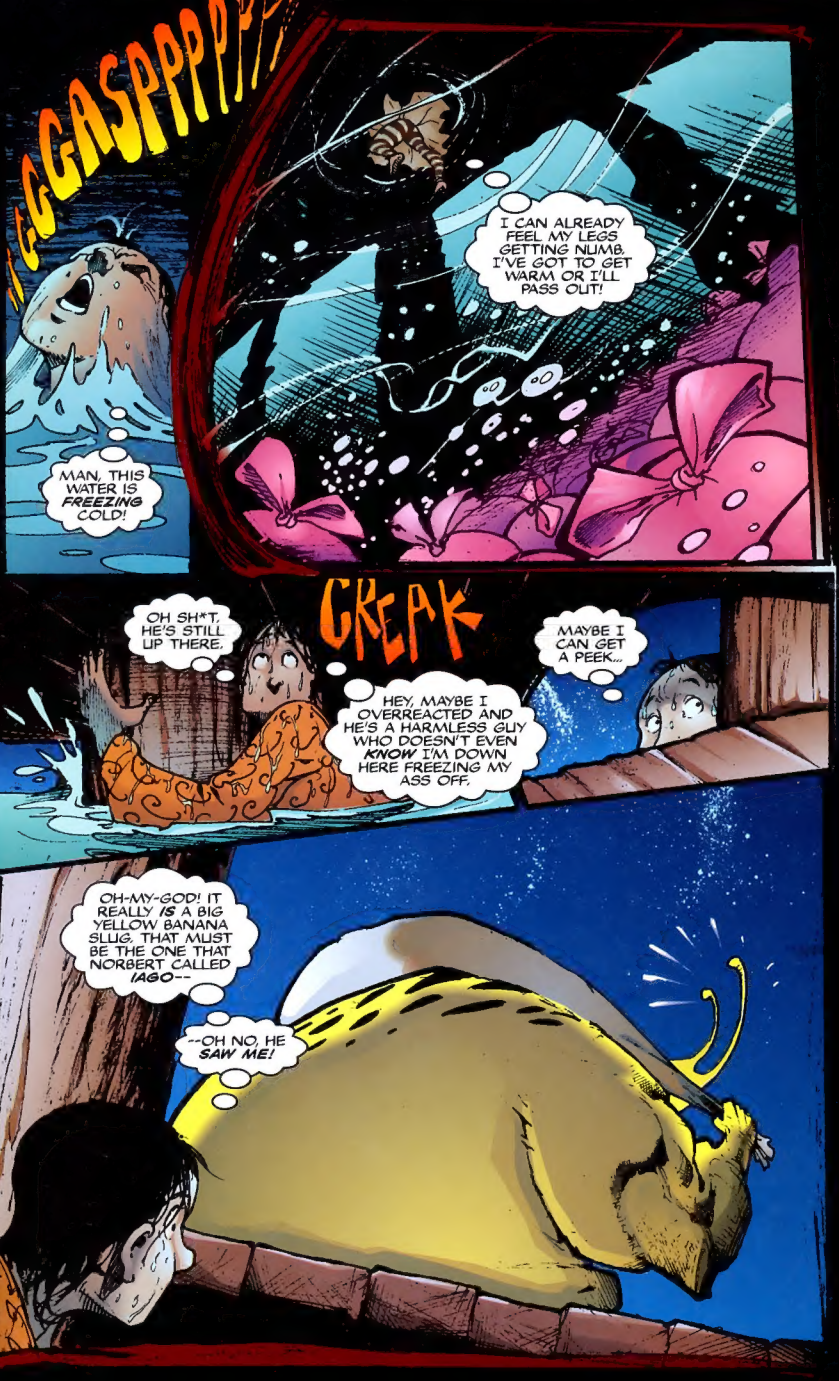
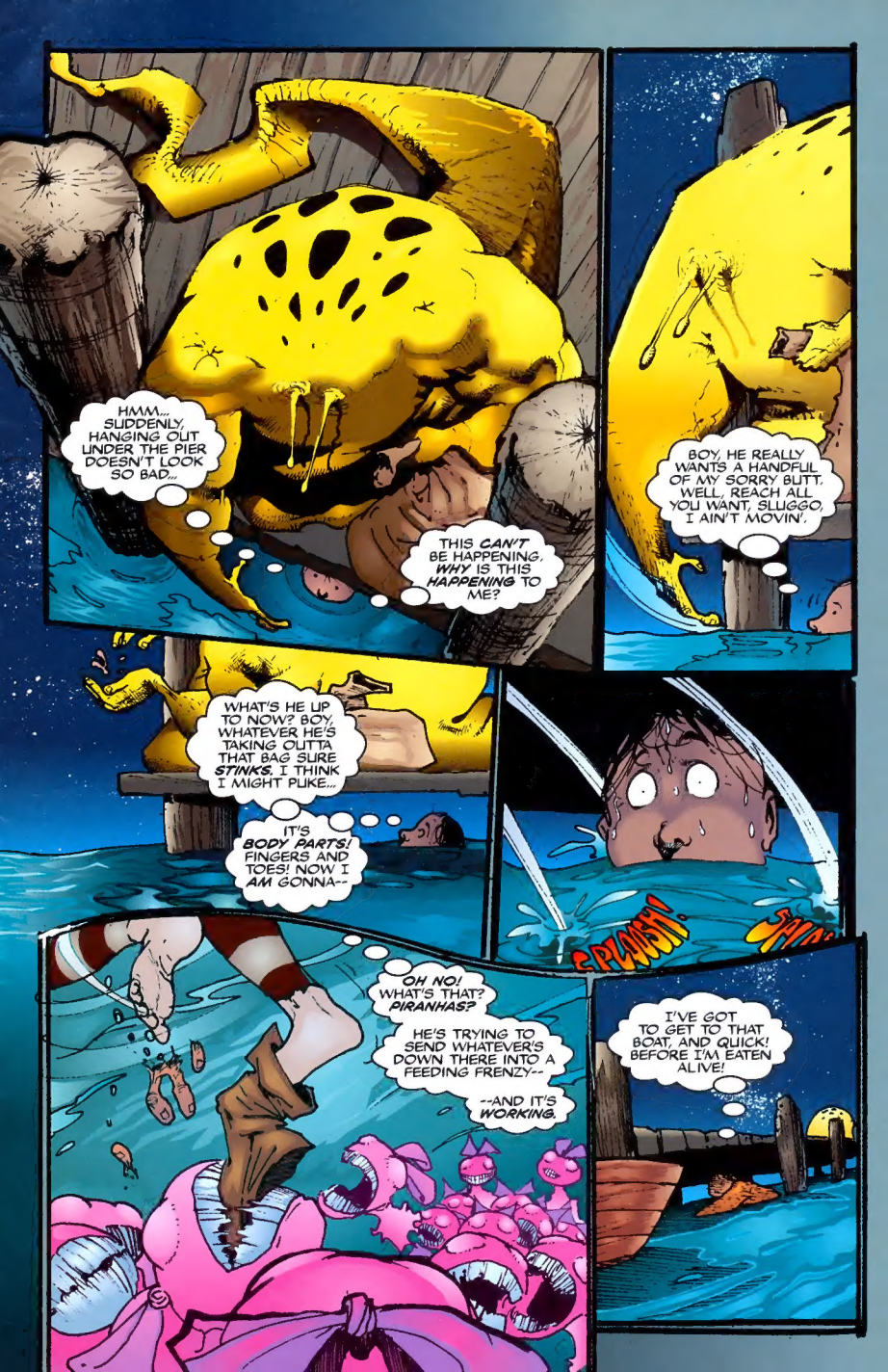

SHE SAID YOU'D SAY THAT, BUT SHE TOLD ME THAT IF WE WERE EVER SEPARATED...THAT YOU WOULD--
LOOK, KID, I'D LIKE TO HELP YOU FIND YOUR MOM, BUT I'VE RETIRED FROM THE SHELTER AND--
I KNOW WHO YOU ARE.
I'VE LOST TRACK OF HER, BUT THERE'S A GUY NAMED DAVE...HE MAY'VE KEPT UP WITH HER. LAST I HEARD, HE WORKED DOING MAINTENANCE DOWNTOWN AT THIS ADDRESS.
NOW PLEASE GO! I'VE HAD ENOUGH GHOSTS REAPPEAR LATELY.
CLIC
YOU ARTEMIS GONE?
NOPE. NAME'S PENDER.
YOU USED TO KNOW HER. MY NAME'S MARK. MARK WI--
NORBERT WENT BACK TO THE DUMP TO BUILD A MASK TO COVER HIS CONSPICUOUSLY LONG FACE. AT LEAST IT GIVES ME TIME TO DIGEST EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED.
THIS IS ALL DAD'S FAULT.
THAT GIRL LOOKS SAD.
SHE NEEDS A BIG HUG.

I BET GETTING ME TO TAKE THIS STUPID URN IS JUST YOUR LAME ATTEMPT TO WORM YOUR WAY BACK INTO MY HEART.
EVEN IF YOU DID TRY AND HELP RAPE VICTIMS, TOO LITTLE TOO LATE, I SAY.
WHERE WERE YOU WHEN IT COUNTED... WHEN MOM NEEDED YOU, HUH? AND WHERE WERE YOU...
...WHEN I WAS FOUR YEARS OLD?
EVER SINCE I LET THIS STUPID THING INTO MY HOUSE, MY WHOLE WORLD'S BEEN COMING APART AT THE SEAMS!
WELL, NO MORE!
SPLOOSH
YOU'VE LIED TO ME FOR THE LAST TIME.
TUNK!
YOU CAN LIE TO ME, DADDY, BUT YOU'RE ONLY FOOLING YOURSELF.
AND I'LL MAKE YOU ACKNOWLEDGE THAT ALL THAT CRAP YOU PULLED TEN YEARS AGO REALLY DID HAPPEN...

...IF IT'S THE LAST THING I DO.
CREAK
SOMEBODY'S OUT HERE THIS LATE?
CREAK
OH, GREAT. SOME CREEP BLOCKING MY WAY BACK.
CREAK
HE DOESN'T SEEM TO HAVE SEEN ME...
OH CRAP!
CAN'T BREATHE!
DON'T PANIC!
CAN'T BREATHE!


GGASPPPP!!
I CAN ALREADY FEEL MY LEGS GETTING NUMB. I'VE GOT TO GET WARM OR I'LL PASS OUT!
MAN, THIS WATER IS FREEZING COLD!
CREAK
OH SH*T. HE'S STILL UP THERE.
HEY, MAYBE I OVERREACTED AND HE'S A HARMLESS GUY WHO DOESN'T EVEN KNOW I'M DOWN HERE FREEZING MY ASS OFF.
MAYBE I CAN GET A PEEK...
OH-MY-GOD! IT REALLY IS A BIG YELLOW BANANA SLUG. THAT MUST BE THE ONE THAT NORBERT CALLED IAGO--
--OH NO, HE SAW ME!


HMM... SUDDENLY, HANGING OUT UNDER THE PIER DOESN'T LOOK SO BAD...
THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING. WHY IS THIS HAPPENING TO ME?
BOY, HE REALLY WANTS A HANDFUL OF MY SORRY BUTT. WELL, REACH ALL YOU WANT, SLUGGO, I AIN'T MOVIN'.
WHAT'S HE UP TO NOW? BOY, WHATEVER HE'S TAKING OUTTA THAT BAG SURE STINKS. I THINK I MIGHT PUKE...
IT'S BODY PARTS! FINGERS AND TOES! NOW I AM GONNA--
SPLOSH!
OH NO! WHAT'S THAT? PIRANHAS?
HE'S TRYING TO SEND WHATEVER'S DOWN THERE INTO A FEEDING FRENZY--
--AND IT'S WORKING.
I'VE GOT TO GET TO THAT BOAT, AND QUICK! BEFORE I'M EATEN ALIVE!

♫ DON'T RUN AWAY FROM YOUR FEELINGS, LITTLE GIRL... ♫
C'MON, SARA, HURRY! HURRY! GOTTA GET THIS THING UNDER THE PIER BEFORE...
THAT'S IT...
...KEEP GOING...
THERE!! SCREW YOU, BUDDY!
NOW IF I CAN STOP SHAKING, MAYBE I CAN CATCH MY BREATH AND THINK!
MY BEST BET IS TO KEEP THIS PIER BETWEEN ME AND HIM, AND SLOWLY WORK MY WAY BACK TO SHORE. THAT SHOULD WORK.
...YOU CAN "LOOKIE"...
THAT'S RIGHT, BUDDY...

...BUT NO "TOUCHIE".
MAN, THIS DUDE WON'T GIVE UP!
OKAY, LET'S SEE HOW YOU LIKE BEING PUSHED INTO A CORNER!
CRUNH
SO YOU DON'T LIKE IT EITHER, HUH?
I'D BETTER LET GO BEFORE YOU TRASH THE WHOLE PIER!
DON'T LOSE IT, SARA.
IGNORE THE CRAMPED SPACE.
IGNORE THE PIRANHAS.
JUST KEEP GOING TOWARD SHORE.

I THINK I'M GETTING LOOPY. HOW DO I GET MYSELF INTO THESE THINGS?
I WISH I WAS WITH STEVE, BACK HOME. OR EVEN WITH NORBERT, AT THE DUMP, ANYWHERE BUT... BUT...
OH-- LOOKIE, PRETTY MOONLIGHT... THAT REMINDS ME OF--
DAMMIT! HERE WE GO AGAIN!
FINE, WHATEVER. TAKE THE STUPID SKIRT.
RRIPP
HEY-- LEGGO O'MY--
OOOFFF!
OKAY--I WON'T FIT! HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO BE ROTATED BEFORE HE GETS IT?
...LEG.
OUCH! STOP TWISTING IT, YOU STUPID @#%&&!!

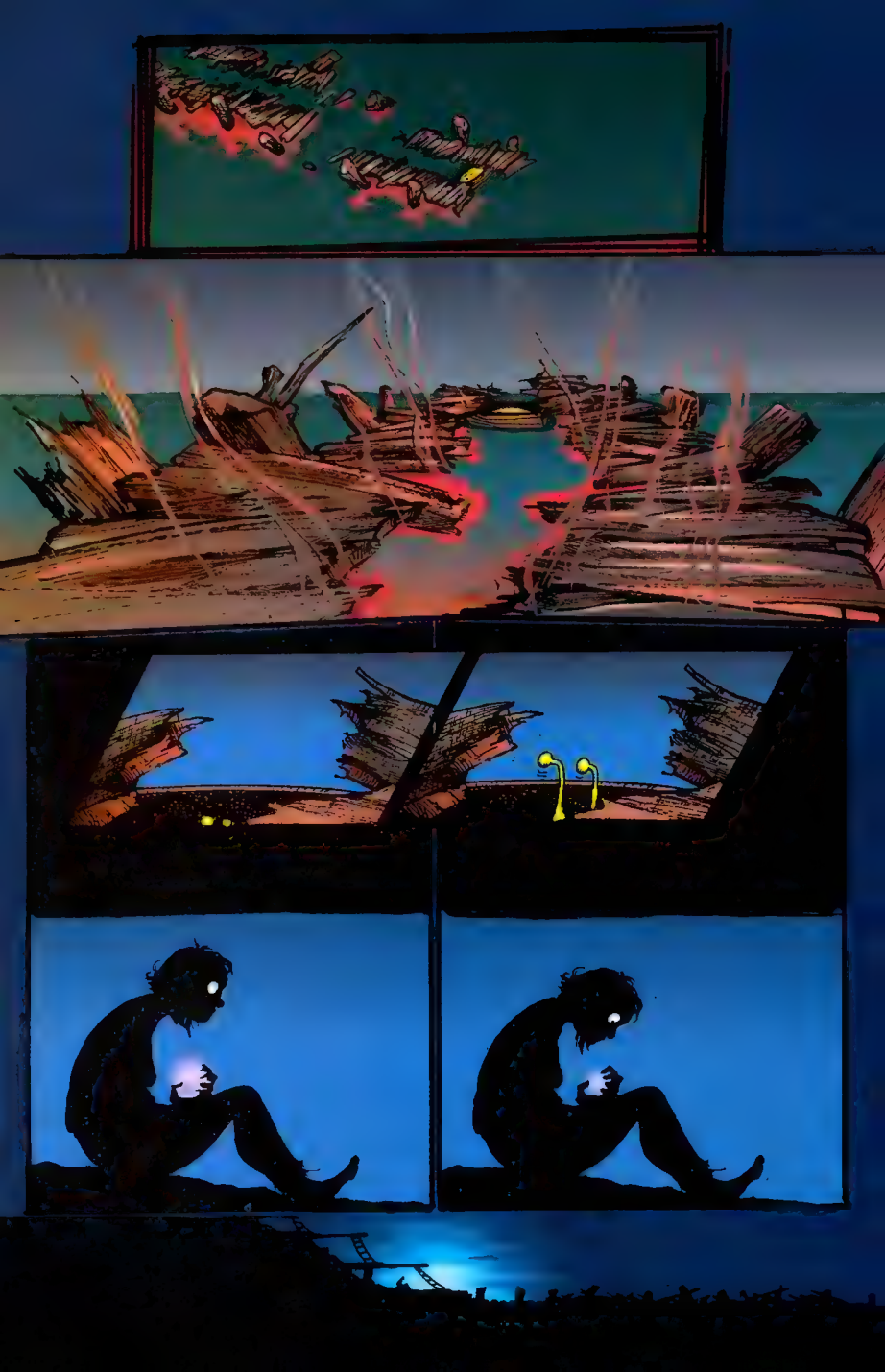
FINALLY! BOY, IS THIS SLUG DENSE! MAYBE NOW HE'LL LEAVE ME ALONE!
I CAN'T KEEP GOING LIKE THIS--I FEEL LIKE I'M GOING TO CRACK UP.
KHHK
YOU KNOW, IF I WAS A WEAKER PERSON, I MIGHT HAVE BURST INTO TEARS BY NOW.
BUT IT'S GOING TO TAKE A LOT MORE THAN THIS TO...
WELL, IF HE THINKS THROWING BODY PARTS WILL DRIVE ME OUT OF THIS BOAT--FAT CHANCE!
PLOP!
UNDERNEATH... SOMETHINGS... TRYING TO...
SPURT!
OH MAN! THEY CAN SMELL THE FINGERS!

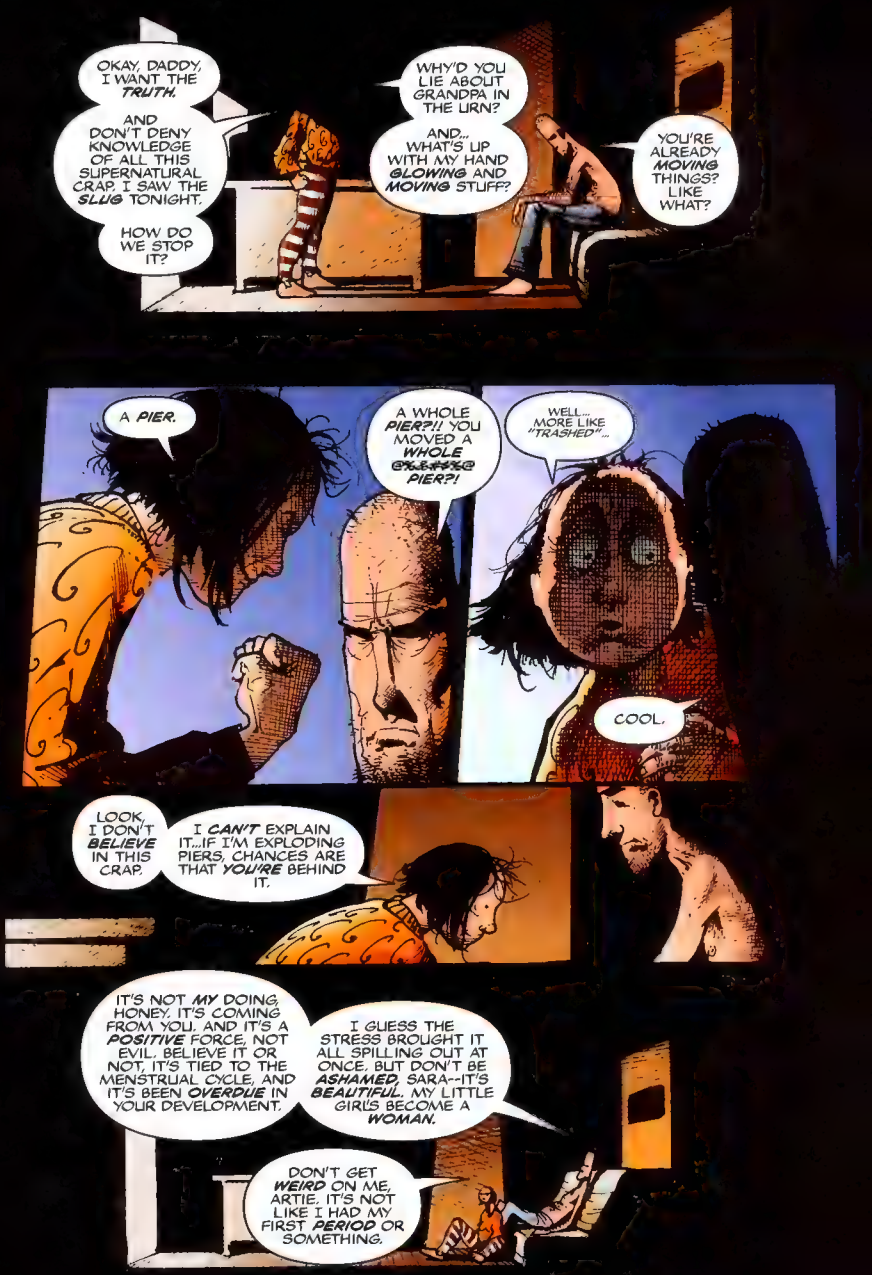
GREAT! NOW WATER'S LEAKING IN!
HE WANTS 'EM TO EAT RIGHT THROUGH THE BOAT, EH?
WELL, WE'LL JUST SEE ABOUT THAT...
THERE! HAVE YOUR FEEDING FRENZY OVER THERE!
BOY, THEY'RE STARVED! LOOK AT 'EM!
SPLOOSH!
HMM... SINCE WHEN DO PIRANHAS HAVE BOWS ON THEIR HEADS?
BOOM
OKAY, THIS IS IT...
...IT'S OVER.
AWW, SCREW IT! HE WANTS A FIGHT?
HE'S GONNA GET ONE.
CRASH

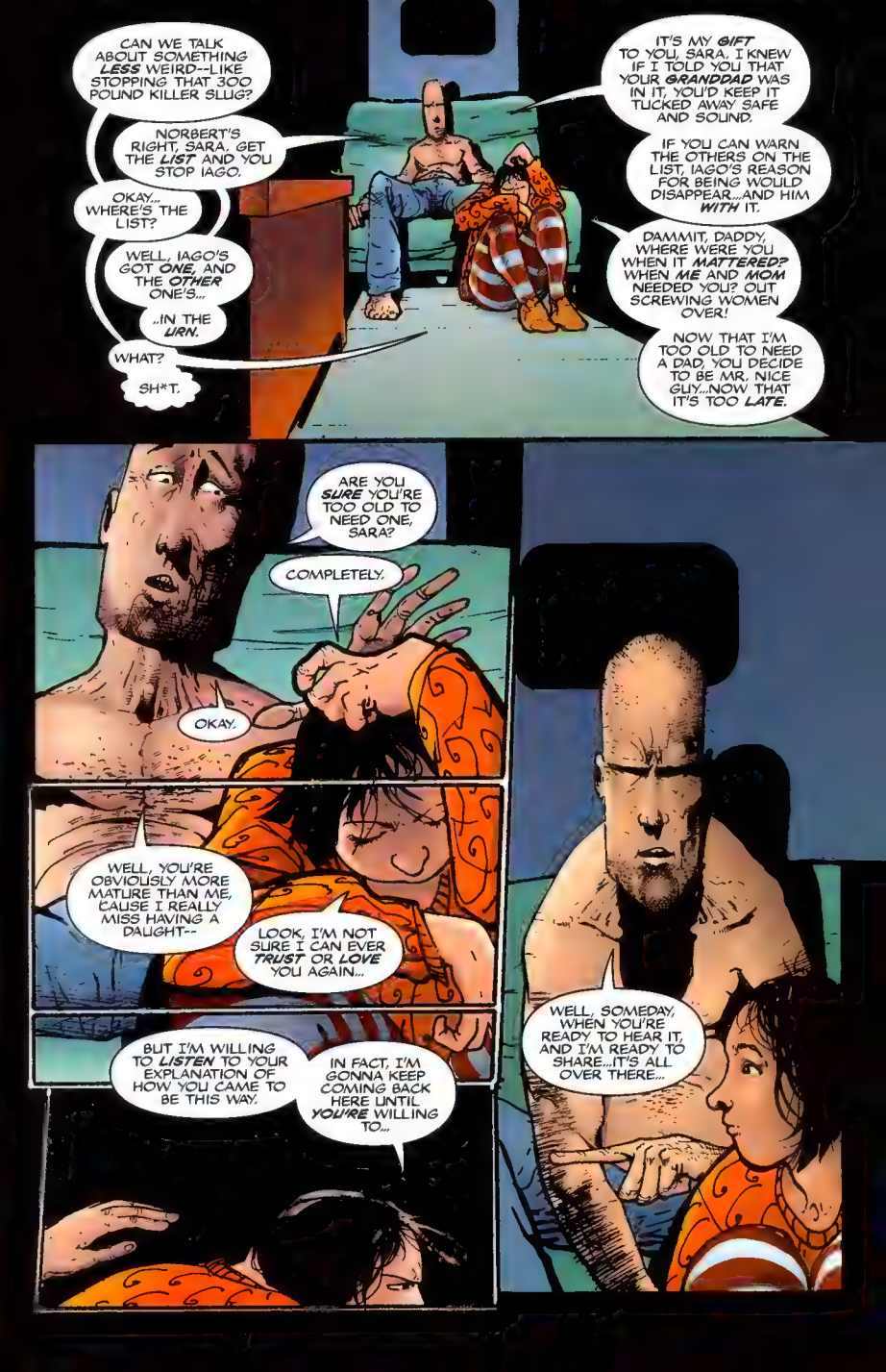
HOW BOUT A HUG?
C'MON, SUCKER, I'M READY...
?
?

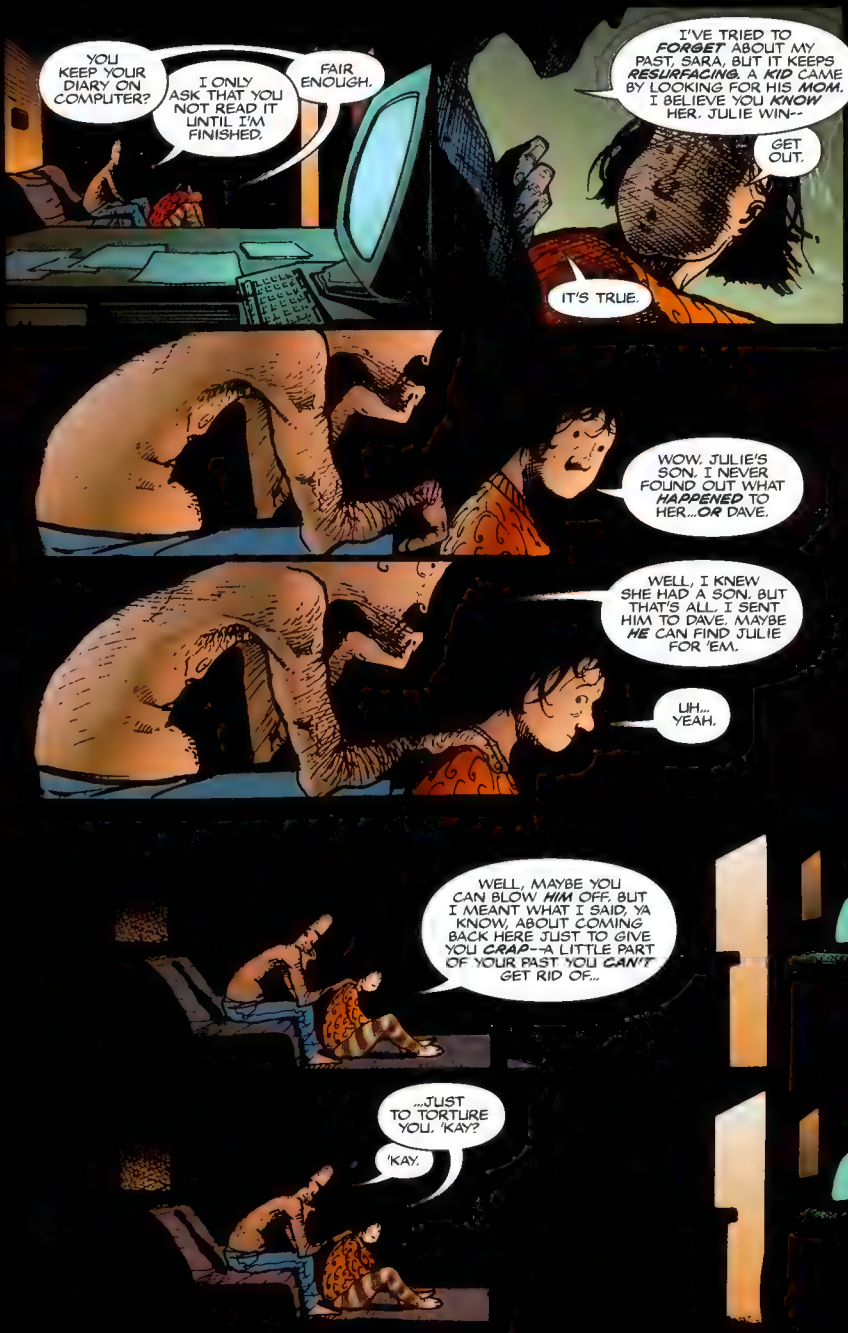
OKAY, HERE'S MY CHANCE, WHILE HE'S HIDING...
...BUT WHAT'S UP WITH MY HAND? IT GLOWED?! AND I'M NOT EVEN DREAMING THIS TIME!
GOTCHA! IT WORKED! DIDN'T THINK I SAW YOU LOOKIN' AT ME, HUH?
TYING HIM IN A KNOT WON'T HOLD HIM FOR LONG...
...BUT MAYBE JUST...
...LONG ENOUGH...
PANT PANT PANT PANT PANT PANT PANT PANT PANT
PANT PANT PANT PANT PANT PANT

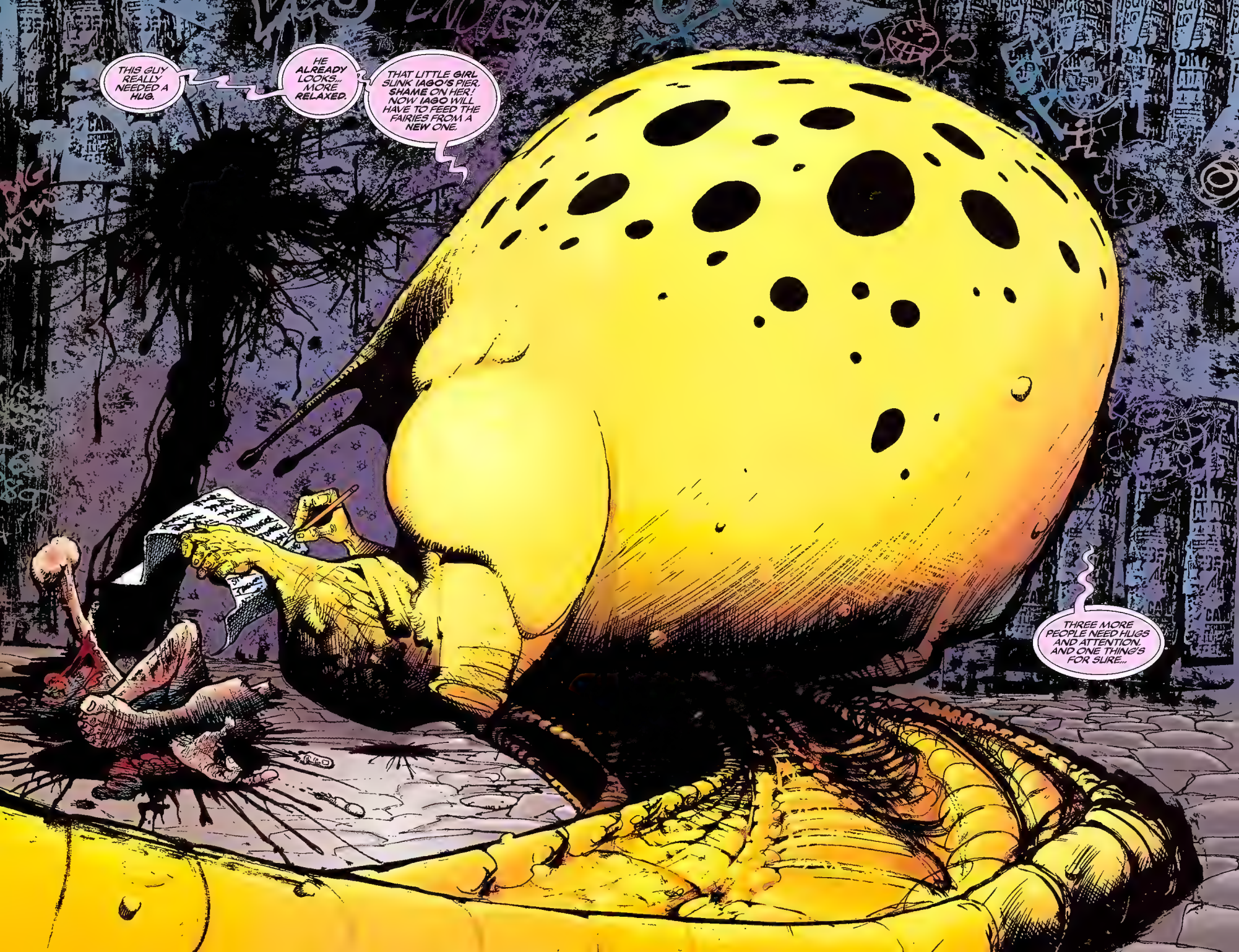
SOMEBODY'S CRAAANKY...
GRAG
GO AHEAD, UNTIE YOURSELF...
...JUST STAY THE HELL AWAY FRO--
OOOFF!

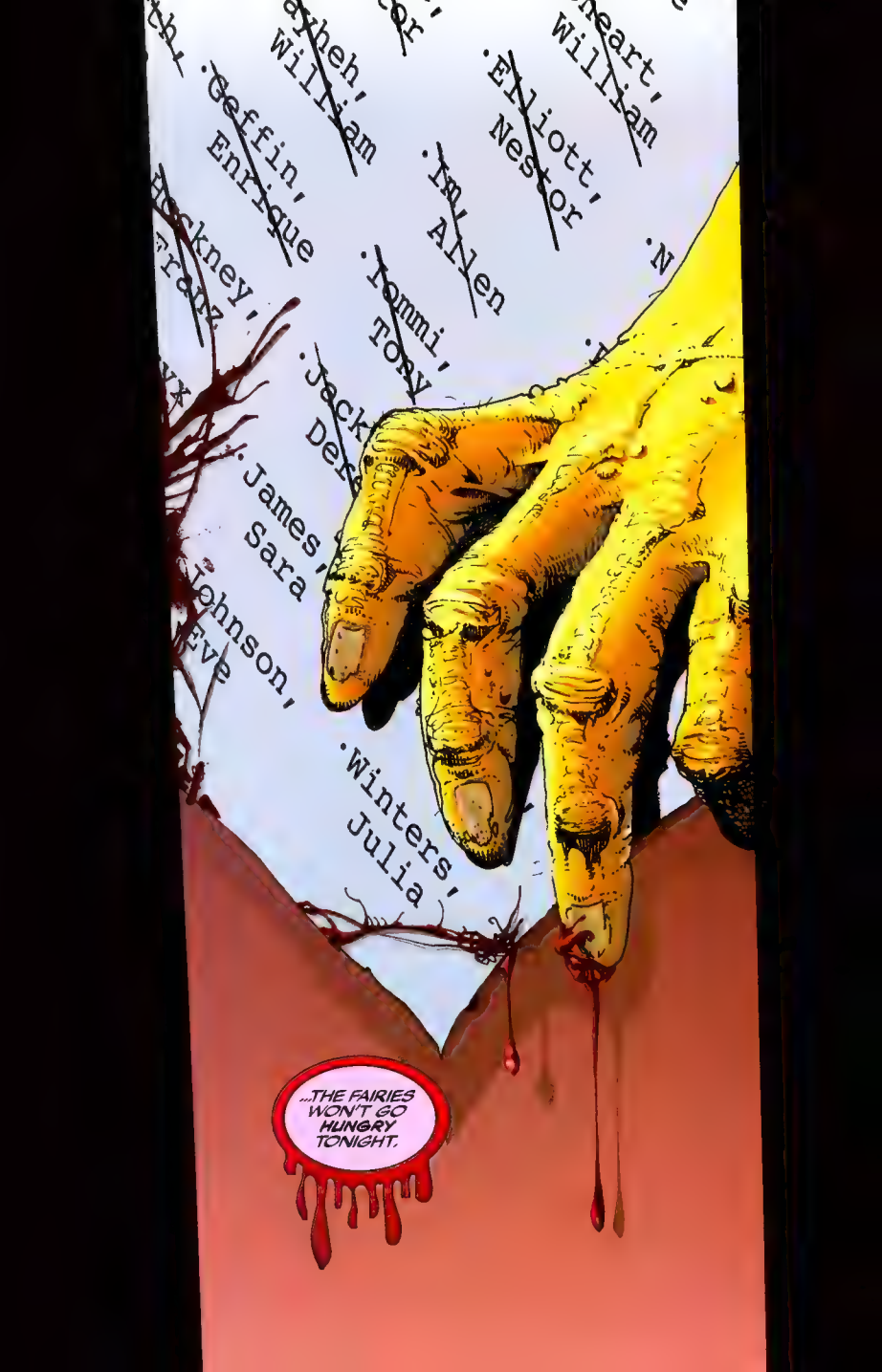



OKAY, DADDY, I WANT THE TRUTH.
AND DON'T DENY KNOWLEDGE OF ALL THIS SUPERNATURAL CRAP. I SAW THE SLUG TONIGHT.
HOW DO WE STOP IT?
WHY'D YOU LIE ABOUT GRANDPA IN THE URN?
AND... WHAT'S UP WITH MY HAND GLOWING AND MOVING STUFF?
YOU'RE ALREADY MOVING THINGS? LIKE WHAT?
A PIER.
A WHOLE PIER?!! YOU MOVED A WHOLE @%&!#%@ PIER?!
WELL... MORE LIKE "TRASHED"...
COOL.
LOOK, I DON'T BELIEVE IN THIS CRAP.
I CAN'T EXPLAIN IT...IF I'M EXPLODING PIERS, CHANCES ARE THAT YOU'RE BEHIND IT.
IT'S NOT MY DOING, HONEY. IT'S COMING FROM YOU. AND IT'S A POSITIVE FORCE, NOT EVIL, BELIEVE IT OR NOT, IT'S TIED TO THE MENSTRUAL CYCLE, AND IT'S BEEN OVERDUE IN YOUR DEVELOPMENT.
I GUESS THE STRESS BROUGHT IT ALL SPILLING OUT AT ONCE. BUT DON'T BE ASHAMED, SARA--IT'S BEAUTIFUL. MY LITTLE GIRL'S BECOME A WOMAN.
DON'T GET WEIRD ON ME, ARTIE. IT'S NOT LIKE I HAD MY FIRST PERIOD OR SOMETHING.


CAN WE TALK ABOUT SOMETHING LESS WEIRD--LIKE STOPPING THAT 300 POUND KILLER SLUG?
NORBERT'S RIGHT, SARA. GET THE LIST AND YOU STOP IAGO.
OKAY... WHERE'S THE LIST?
WELL, IAGO'S GOT ONE, AND THE OTHER ONE'S...
..IN THE URN.
WHAT?
SH*T.
IT'S MY GIFT TO YOU, SARA. I KNEW IF I TOLD YOU THAT YOUR GRANDDAD WAS IN IT, YOU'D KEEP IT TUCKED AWAY SAFE AND SOUND.
IF YOU CAN WARN THE OTHERS ON THE LIST, IAGO'S REASON FOR BEING WOULD DISAPPEAR...AND HIM WITH IT.
DAMMIT, DADDY, WHERE WERE YOU WHEN IT MATTERED? WHEN ME AND MOM NEEDED YOU? OUT SCREWING WOMEN OVER!
NOW THAT I'M TOO OLD TO NEED A DAD, YOU DECIDE TO BE MR. NICE GUY...NOW THAT IT'S TOO LATE.
ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE TOO OLD TO NEED ONE, SARA?
COMPLETELY.
OKAY.
WELL, YOU'RE OBVIOUSLY MORE MATURE THAN ME, CAUSE I REALLY MISS HAVING A DAUGHT--
LOOK, I'M NOT SURE I CAN EVER TRUST OR LOVE YOU AGAIN...
BUT I'M WILLING TO LISTEN TO YOUR EXPLANATION OF HOW YOU CAME TO BE THIS WAY.
IN FACT, I'M GONNA KEEP COMING BACK HERE UNTIL YOU'RE WILLING TO...
WELL, SOMEDAY, WHEN YOU'RE READY TO HEAR IT, AND I'M READY TO SHARE...IT'S ALL OVER THERE...


YOU KEEP YOUR DIARY ON COMPUTER?
I ONLY ASK THAT YOU NOT READ IT UNTIL I'M FINISHED.
FAIR ENOUGH.
I'VE TRIED TO FORGET ABOUT MY PAST, SARA, BUT IT KEEPS RESURFACING. A KID CAME BY LOOKING FOR HIS MOM. I BELIEVE YOU KNOW HER. JULIE WIN--
GET OUT.
IT'S TRUE.
WOW. JULIE'S SON. I NEVER FOUND OUT WHAT HAPPENED TO HER...OR DAVE.
WELL, I KNEW SHE HAD A SON. BUT THAT'S ALL. I SENT HIM TO DAVE. MAYBE HE CAN FIND JULIE FOR 'EM.
UH... YEAH.
WELL, MAYBE YOU CAN BLOW HIM OFF. BUT I MEANT WHAT I SAID, YA KNOW, ABOUT COMING BACK HERE JUST TO GIVE YOU CRAP--A LITTLE PART OF YOUR PAST YOU CAN'T GET RID OF...
...JUST TO TORTURE YOU, 'KAY?
'KAY.


THIS GUY REALLY NEEDED A HUG.
HE ALREADY LOOKS... MORE RELAXED.
THAT LITTLE GIRL SLINK IAGO'S PIER. SHAME ON HER! NOW IAGO WILL HAVE TO FEED THE FAIRIES FROM A NEW ONE.
THREE MORE PEOPLE NEED HUGS AND ATTENTION, AND ONE THING'S FOR SURE...


...THE FAIRIES WON'T GO HUNGRY TONIGHT.

Well, it finally happened. Between Bill's schedule of doing five other books and him trying to nudge me into writing a few issues of my own (like #16), I decided to own up to the madness I've started and write this book myself. While I'll miss Bill terribly, he'll have more time to work on Journey and other projects that are his. But this won't be the last you'll see of him in these pages, hopefully, 'cause he's promised a crossover with his Journey character, Wolverine McAlister, in a future issue. Until then, I'm afraid you're stuck with me, with help from Old Uncle Mike. (Please don't be too hard on us; we're still learning as we go.)

Dear Sam,

Uh...I guess your comic book THE MAXX is the best I've ever read. I'm only 11 but I sure know if a comic is good or not.

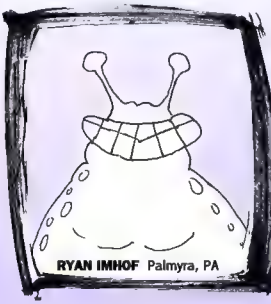
If you know, am I your youngest fan?

Austin Havicar
Houston, TX

Sorry, Austin, but Phillip Banks of Blytheville, AR (who sent us a drawing) beat you out at the ripe old age of 7, although it seems to me we've gotten stuff from even younger.

Dear Sam,

Yes, you're right, Alan did write a cool story. Mr. Gone (Artie) is still a nasty dude, even if he's lying about it to Sara. (What's that saying about a leopard not changing its spots?) But anyway, the focus on Sara is just fine with me. It looks like her character has no real direction anymore, and another confrontation with Mr. Gone (Artie) could help push her back into some much-needed self reliance. And if not that, it should make, like you said, a cool story. Of course the major question is, "Is Norbert The Maxx?" I'm sure the popular guess would be, "Yes," and that's my guess. But I hope that's not revealed for some time, if just to keep us focused on Sara's story.



John R. Shearer
North Olmsted, OH

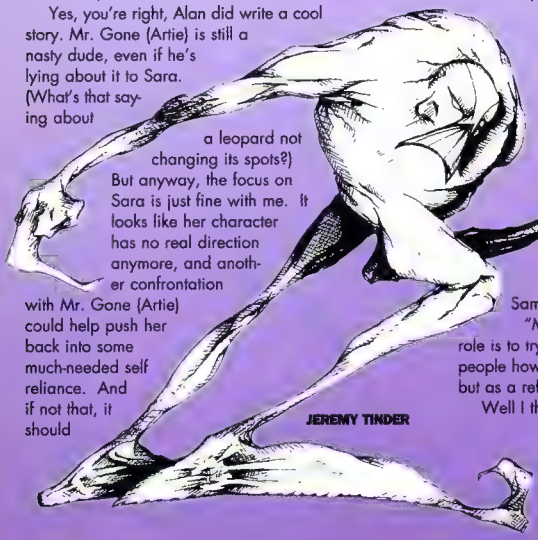
Dear Sam,

1. How did Sara, after nailing shut the bathroom flap, get out of her john? I've looked all over the floor plan, but I can't see another exit.
2. Are the "Friends of Maxx" stories going to replace the regular Maxx for that month?

Sincerely,
Brian Steggeman
Lawton, OK

1. You got the wrong flap. The cat flap by the toilet (nailed shut) is 6"X9". The door flap (at the other end) is 3'X3'. P.S. I forgot to draw the cat flap in the map in #21.

2. No, not replace—normally I took every third month to catch up, but instead I decided to do twice the work and pump out 48 pages of "Friends of Maxx" instead. Pretty stoopid, huh?



Sam & Company,

"My role in society, or any artist's or poet's role is to try and express what we all feel. Not to tell people how to feel. Not as a preacher, not as a leader, but as a reflection of us all."—John Lennon

Well I think you have done a grand job of reflecting the emotions of many of us lost within society. Keep it up!! You guys Rock!!!!

Jenny Gaitsch
Nashville, TN

P.S. Ish 22 you spelled my friend Sean's

last name wrong; it's LAMBERGER not Sanberger. Just thought I would tell you!! OHH!! What's up with Fred Flower & Uncle Italian Moose?!?! Anything?

Nope.

Caribou Sam,

Hey,. about ish 22: Cool. You printed my stuff...BUT YOU SPELT MY NAME RIGHT!!!

I'm gone,

Tung Nguyen

Hey—I bet you WROTE LEGIBLY!!! What a concept...

Dear Sam,

1. I like the new villain as a slug with a list and I'm sure we'll find out later what it is. I do have one question concerning the slug. Is he trying to appease the fairies, or trying to kill them?
2. I noticed that some panels look painted. Are they actually painted or does the colorist make them look like that? If they are, do you do this for a reason or just for fun?
3. So, Sarah can move the glass. Is this just with her subconscious mind or can she learn to do this consciously as her father said.
4. When this story is over, will you be doing someone that has no connection to the first two, or will you be going back to Julie?

Tom Johnson

Rutland, MA

1. Appease.

2. Everything that looks painted was painted by me. Steve colors the rest. Nothing I do has a reason; I paint 'cause it's fun.

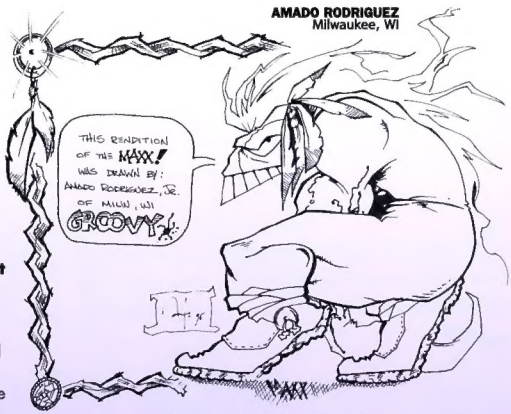
3. We just saw what her hand did this issue (unless you're reading Maxx Traxx first), and since it comes from her subconscious, she has no control of it yet, so her conscious mind has a lot of trouble dealing.

4. For some reason I keep visualizing Julie's son and his Outback. Anybody curious about a male Outback?

Sam,

What the #@*% are you trying to do! Get me to stop reading? 21 and 22 suck! You changed Sarah to Sara and no Maxx. He's the whole freakin' reason I buy this comic! Oh yeah, the Gen13/Maxx crossover really sucks!

Now for the positive junk. The Maxx figure is very cool. (I really like the bendom Is.) Will there be a Mr.



AMADO RODRIGUEZ
Milwaukee, WI

Gone with a detachable head? Will there be a Maxx/Spawn crossover?

Oh, and Chris Olson, I discovered Maxx on MTV. I have also every freakin' issue (no offense, Sam). I have the poster, the figure, I'm a Maxxhead!! Chris shut the #@%* up about your MTV #*%@! Oh and Melissa K.'s letter made me write that last paragraph.

So thank you Melissa. Oh and Sam, your comic kicks butt!

Alex Hackert

Long Beach, CA

ANDREA MINOJA
Padova, Italy

Dear Sam,

I am truly sorry about my comment about THE MAXX TV show in my last letter. I didn't mean that I didn't love the first season, it's that it is being shown on MTV. Now I hope I do not offend anyone, but my opinion is that MTV is easily the worst channel ever created! But, if that's all you can get, then I have no complaints. If it isn't, then I complain that the best book on earth is being submitted to a bunch of Yo-boys who would mock it if it didn't come on their favorite channel. Anyways, I would rather have a show that attracted people to my book instead of tempting them to discuss it on MTV YACK LIVE.

Love your book,

Nathaniel Long

Annapolis, MD

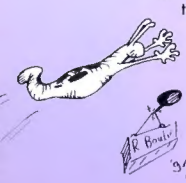
Any show or cartoon or toy that turns on one more Maxxhead is OK by me.

SANDRO KOPP
Germany

•**The six drawings are done by R. BOULIE,** The Netherlands

Dear Sam,
The itsy, bitsy is
Climbed up the water spout.
Up came THE MAXX,
To tear his gizard out.
Out cam Mr. Gone,
To cause THE MAXX some pain.
And the itsy, bitsy is
Attacked THE MAXX again.
Thanks for hearing
my thoughts,
Dustin Hutt
Colorado

Dear Sam Kieth,
In Maxx #19 Mr. Gone popped his head through into the real world and saw Julie. He then said, "Great Googly Moogly." In a Frank Zappa song on the album, Apostrophe, the same phrase, "great googly moogly," comes up in "Nanook Rubs It." An inspiration of yours?
Your watchful fan
Sean Ricci



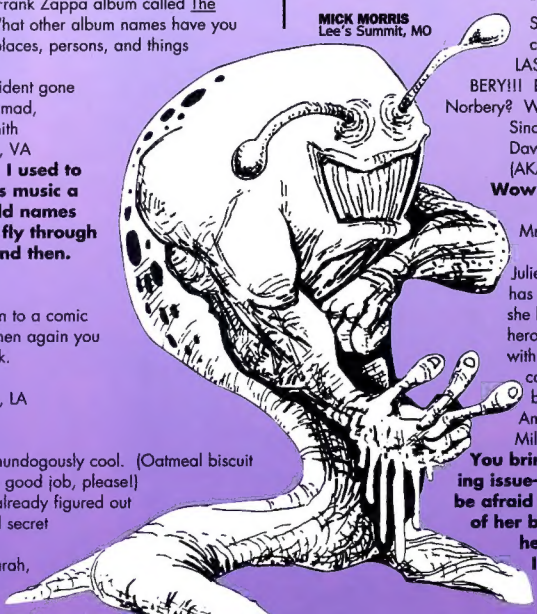
Actually it was Uncle Mike (Heisler) who came up with that. It was 3 in the morning and nobody could think of anything profound for Mr. G to say when he saw the lamp.

Hey Sam,
I saw there's a Frank Zappa album called The Grand Wazoo. What other album names have you taken and named places, persons, and things with?
A lab accident gone
hideously mad,
Myron Smith
Ridgeway, VA

OK, ya got me. I used to listen to Zappa's music a lot, and those old names and images still fly through my mind now and then.

Dear Sam,
I've never written to a comic book before. But then again you aren't a comic book.
Todd
Chalmette, LA

Yo Mister Kieth,
#21 was extramundogously cool. (Oatmeal biscuit to Alan for doing a good job, please!) But I'm afraid I've already figured out all the plotlines and secret personalities:
Sara is really Sarah,



from Maxx 5-20 (I'm good, ain't I?)
Steve (who is actually Julie, who robbed a bank and had to have an operation to get away from the cops) is going to cut Artie's head off before we find out what the truth is, and all this dream-reality-crap will start anew. Sara will be bitten by a radioactive spider and decide to fight crime, and in the end, the l'il banana slug will do something to make the world end.
Sandro Kopp
Germany
P.S. I love-a Fred Flower and Uncle Italian Moose.

I think Dave and I started something with The Flower and The Moose. Gee—a cult following after just a one-page ad...

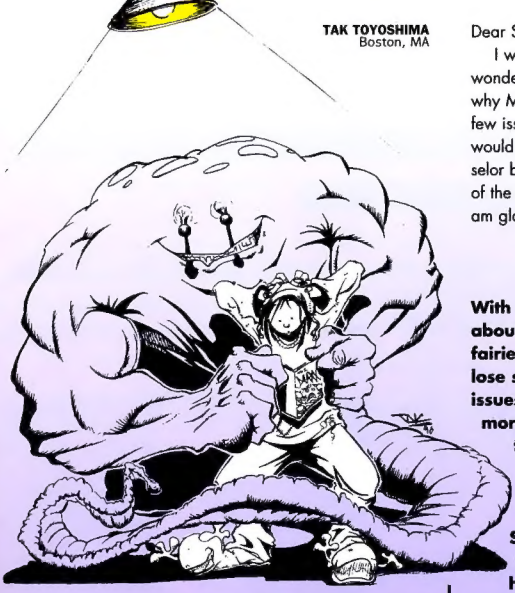
Dear Sam,
When I read issues 21 and 22, I thought you were nuts! I mean, Sara(h) on welfare, and her mom with cancer? Top it all off with NO MAXX, and you've got one angry David (me). But after I read them some more and read issue 23, I realized that it's still a great book.
Also, when I started to read those issues, I realized that the bum Julie hit in her car is named Dave. My name is David!!. The old "wino" that followed Sara(h) around is called Norbert. MY LAST NAME IS NORBERY!!! Dave Norbert/David Norbery? Wow!
Sincerely
David Norbery
(AKA The Maxx)

Wow!

MICK MORRIS
Lee's Summit, MO

Mr. Kieth,
Sara is now "The Julie" in the book, but she has Gone's powers. Will she be the villainess or the heroine? (Lord knows, with her disposition she could conceivably be both.)
Amado Rodriguez, Jr.
Milwaukee, WI

You bring up an interesting issue—that Sara might be afraid there's evil inside of her because Gone is her dad. I wonder...



TAK TOYOSHIMA
Boston, MA

Dear Sam,

I was reading through some back issues, and I was wondering if it would ever be explained as to how or why Mr. Gone became a Serial Rapist. Since the next few issues will be dealing with Mr Gone and Sarah, I would like to see this subject addressed. I am a counselor by profession, and I enjoy the multifaceted qualities of the characters, particularly Mr. Gone and Sarah. I am glad to see you addressing their characters more.

Thank you for your time,
John Merck
Gainesville, GA

JOHAN TOORELL
Sweden

With all this stuff about slugs and fairies, I don't want to lose sight of those issues either. But the more I keep adding, the more I have NO idea how to wrap this story up by #30. Screw it. I guess the story will just have to dictate which issue we end up on.

Dear Sam,

This is about a letter I saw in issue #20 from Jason Quane. This is to anyone who has ever felt like him.

I was exactly like him, action figures and all, no hope of having any friends or a girlfriend. It was like that for a while and I almost gave up hope but then I realized I had to quit feeling sorry for myself, and as soon as I did that, everything changed—not in a day, it took a while and it was hard, but I did it. I have friends, a girlfriend, and a life.

Even now that I changed so much, I still come home every day to my action figures and Star Wars videos, but most of all, The Maxx. Chris Olsen was right: even now, if I lost all my friends and my girlfriend dumped me, I would still feel better knowing that no matter how many friends you have, there's always someone who feels just like you do and all your fellow Maxxheads are there for you.

From a friend

PS/HOUSEKEEPING DETAILS WE GET ASKED ALL THE TIME: No subscriptions or retail sales available/sorry. Use Head to Head to find back issues/fan clubs/whatever (use the address in the indicia)/postcards are cheap and easy like us/WRITE LEGIBLY. No we don't print all the letters or art we get/too many/yes we do read them ALL/you might get answered or printed or edited/you might not/life's funny that way. B&Wart has better chance of being published than color/can't return artwork/ sorry. Keep 'em coming/the better the letters and submissions, the better the book! Oh yeah.

BART SARIC
Santa Monica, CA

THE FREAK
FRANK VAN SEIJEN
-1996-
FRANK VAN SEIJEN
The Netherlands